Lucus, et obscuris claudunt conuallibus umbræ.
Sed non ante datur telluris operta subire,
Auricomos quam quis decerpserit arbore fœtus
Hoc sibi pulchra suum ferri Proserpina munus
Instituit primo auulso non deficit alter
Aureus, et simili frondescit virga metallo.
Ergo alte vestiga oculis, et rite repertum
Carpe manu, namque ipse volens facilisque sequetur.
Si te fata vocant aliter non viribus vllis
Vincere nec duro poteris conuellere ferro.*

* *Æneid*, VI, 126.[18]

LO, the three-&-twenty verses wherein our golden bough is described, & wherein we can imagine three-and-twenty leaves, each of which will have a letter written in it. When the Sibyl says furthermore,—

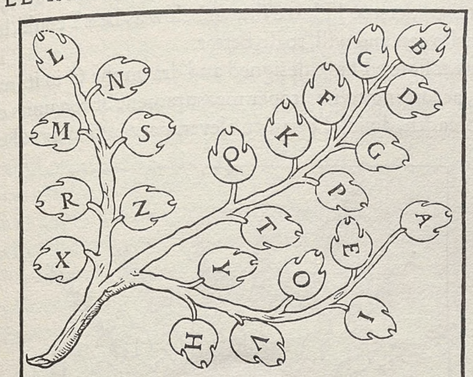
Præterea iacet exanimum tibi corpus amici
Heu nescis, totamque incestat funere classem,†

†*Æneid*, VI, 149. *Tory mistakenly wrote, or printed, 'examinum' and 'fumere.'*

she is no longer speaking of the golden bough, but of another; whereof, then, he who shall well perceive Virgil's secret meaning will find to be true all that I have hereinbefore said and written according to my poor understanding.

I Have drawn the golden bough according to Virgil in the verses hereinbefore quoted, which, as I have said, signifies learning; & beneath it the limb without leaves, which denotes ignorance. But note well how, on the said golden bough, I have drawn three twigs, of which the one in the middle, which is the chief & longest one, has nine leaves, wherein are written, one apart from another, the nine mutes, B, C, D, F, G, K, P, Q, T, which represent the nine Muses. Then, on another twig, at the left side, there are seven leaves wherein in like manner are written the seven semi-vowels, L, M, N, R, S, X, and Z, which represent the seven Liberal Arts. Likewise the third, right-hand twig has on it seven leaves, wherein are written the five Latin vowels, A, E, I, O, V, and one Greek one, Y, and with them the aspirate H, which, because it is not deemed a true letter, is written in the lowest leaf. By which six vowels and aspirate, we understand the four Cardinal Virtues & the Graces, of comely grace and virtue. Thus, then, in the said Golden Bough of Virgil are comprised and covertly suggested the nine Muses, the seven Liberal Arts, the four Cardinal Virtues, and the three Graces, which make the full number of the three-and-twenty letters of the Alphabet.

LE RAMEAV DOR ET DE SCIENCE



LA BRANCHE DIGNORANCE

TO the best of my ability, I have by God's grace, according to my humble theory & philosophical speculation, adapted the Homeric chain of gold to our model letter I, & Virgil's golden bough to the nine Muses and their companions. Now if it be our Lord's pleasure, I purpose to extend the said Homeric chain of gold, which I have drawn in the I alone, of ten links, which represent the nine Muses & their Apollo, to three-and-twenty links arranged evenly around the other model letter, O, which said links will represent, as the leaves of Virgil's golden bough have done, the three-and-twenty letters of the Alphabet, & like-

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